

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

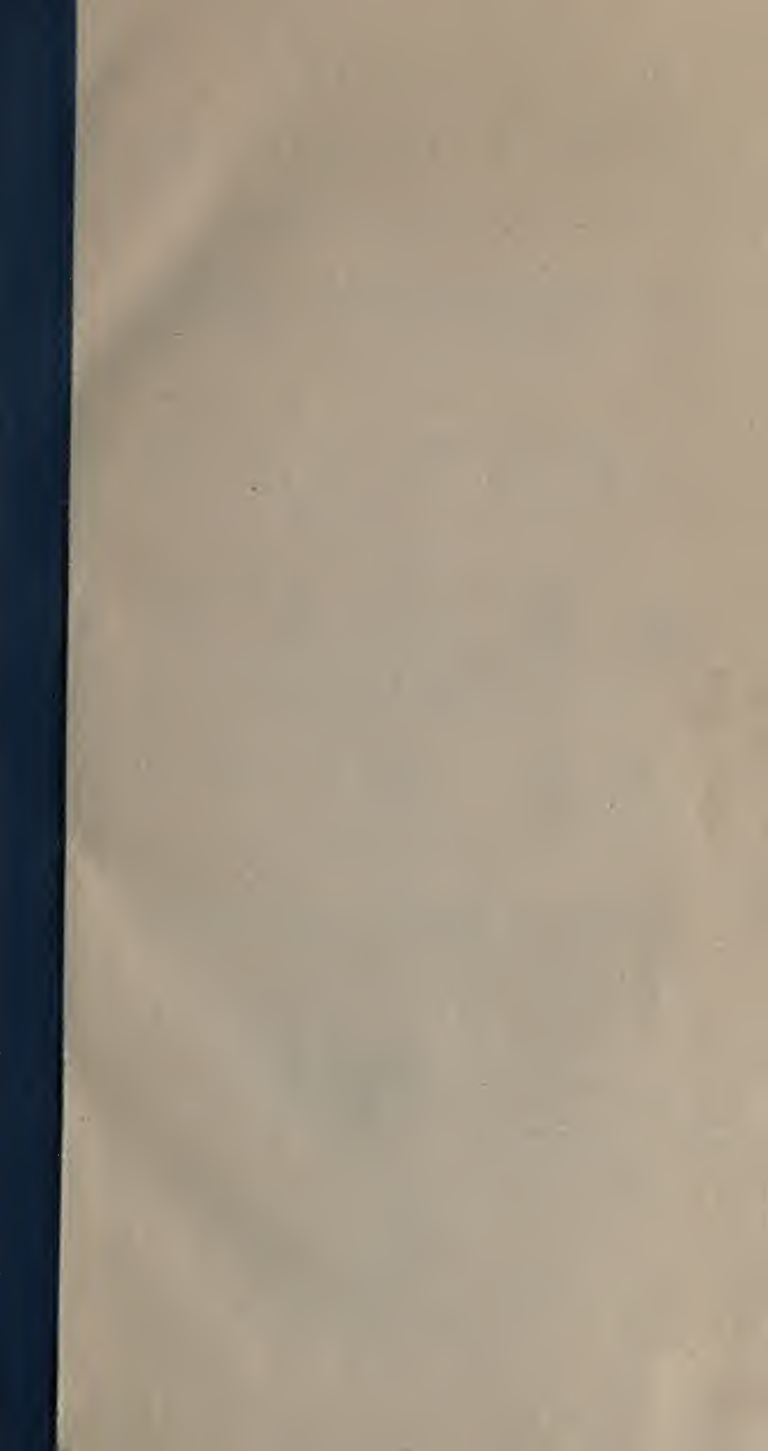


3 1761 01308330 8

Some thoughts on the woollen
manufactures of England...

HD
9901
.5
S6
1731
c.1
ROBA

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



SOME
THOUGHTS
ON THE
Woollen Manufactures
OF
ENGLAND:
IN A
LETTER
FROM A
CLOTHIER
TO A
MEMBER *of* PARLIAMENT.



40984
15. 2.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. ROBERTS, at the *Oxford-Arms*
in *Warwick-Lane.* 1731.

THE JOURNAL

OF THE

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF

SCIENCE AND ART

AND THE PROMOTION OF

THE INTERESTS OF

THE PEOPLE

OF THE UNITED STATES

AND OF THE WORLD

AND OF THE FUTURE

OF HUMANITY

AND OF THE UNIVERSE

AND OF THE GODS

AND OF THE SPIRITS

AND OF THE ELEMENTS



SOME
THOUGHTS
ON THE
WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES of
ENGLAND, &c.

S I R,



THE Business of Trade is so intimately woven with the Interest of States, that it is become the Duty of the greatest Men, to enquire into the true Condition of it: And you are too sensible of the Benefits *England* obtains by her general Commerce, not to think it incumbent on us to pursue all proper Means for its Preservation. You know the mutual Dependance one Trade has upon another, and you see how necessary it is for this Nation, whose Happiness and Liberty are supported by the Riches and Power we acquire by Manufactures, Traffick, and Navigation, to defend and cherish every Branch thereof, lest the Loss of any particular Trade, might break the Chain of
B Commerce,

Commerce, and render the Attempts of jealous and designing Neighbours, to supplant us therein, more effectual. But above all, you are too well acquainted with the Consequence of the Woollen Manufactures, to the general Interest of this Kingdom, not to look with a jealous Eye, on the great Improvements made therein, by some of our Neighbours, who are become rather more than Rivals to us in this Trade. And you will readily agree, that the speediest Means ought to be used, in order to recover those Branches of our Traffick, which are impaired by Mistakes in our former Conduct. I will not therefore make any Apology for this Letter, which is on a Subject wherein the Interest of *England* is so nearly concern'd.

It is needless to enquire into the natural Causes, why the Wool of *England* and *Ireland* is so well adapted to the making of Manufactures. For whether it proceeds from the Temperature of the Air in these Islands, that our Wool is not so coarse and hairy as in *France*, and most other Countries, nor so short and soft as in *Spain*; or that the good Qualities of our Wool proceed from other Causes, it matters not: for it is sufficient to my present Purpose, that it is generally allow'd, our Wool is of such a Nature, as renders it proper for all those Kinds of Manufactures, which are of most general Use. This Foreigners have at all Times been so sensible of, that when we were only, as it were, Shepherds for the Manufacturers of the Continent, *England* was courted for the Staple or Market of her Wool, which carry'd Plenty to every City it was settled in. But in those Days Trade was not the Business of *England*, and our Kings were contented with the Revenue brought into their *Exchequer*, by the grand Custom, and Fines for Licences impos'd on the Exportation of Wool.

AT length several Accidents contributing to change the Constitution of our Government, to a more peaceable Completion, People turn'd their Heads to Improvements in Trade, for which this Country is so happily situated. And Queen *Elizabeth*, who laid hold on every Opportunity to enlarge the Commerce of her Subjects, taking Advantage of the Civil Wars on the Continent, granted Privileges to the Manufacturers of the *Low-Countries*, who fled from the *Spanish* Oppression, and establish'd amongst us those Manufactures of Wool, which soon prov'd the chief Foundation of our general Commerce, and afterwards became the Envy of all our Neighbours.

IT is not necessary to our present Purpose, to take a particular View of the several Laws made for Improving this Branch of our Trade: I will therefore only in general observe, That the carrying of Wool out of the Kingdom was prohibited, and our Woollen Manufactures were so properly encourag'd, that we soon became the most considerable Clothiers of the World. And in order to make the Benefits of this Trade center in *England*, we prohibited the Exportation of Wool and Woollen Manufactures from *Ireland* to any Foreign Realm or Dominion, or to any other Place, but a few Ports in *England* and *Wales*, of which I shall hereafter take more particular Notice.

You are too clear-sighted in Affairs of this Nature, to approve of their Policy who are for creating an imaginary Distinction, between the Interest of *England* and that of *Ireland*: For you readily perceive, that Men who look on Things in this wrong Light, frequently form Opinions that prove hurtful to the Interest of *England*. It is certain, the Advantages arising from *Ireland* ought always to

result to the Mother Country, in lieu whereof she gives Protection ; this naturally implies Superiority in her, but does not create any incompatible Interest. And this indeed seems to be so truly our Case, that it is probable, we can never unreasonably cramp the Industry of our Fellow-Subjects in *Ireland*, without doing manifest Injury to the Trade of *England*. Of this many Instances might be given, but you will find it fully enough proved by the Consequence of those Methods we took with Relation to the Woollen Manufactures of that Country. And to give you a more perfect View thereof, it will be necessary to lay before you a short Detail of that Affair.

THE Wars of *Ireland*, after the Revolution, ending in the peaceable Settlement of that Country in the Year 1691. People betook themselves to some Industry. Thus they naturally fell into Breeding of Cattle and Sheep, and they again manufactur'd Wool, as they had done in the former Reigns. But the Cheapness of all Necessaries for Life, and the Goodness of the Material, enabling them to carry on these Manufactures at easier Rates than we could, it bred such a Jealousy in us, that in *June* 1698. Addresses were presented to the King by both Houses of Parliament, beseeching his Majesty to take effectual Measures to prevent the Growth of the Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland*, and to turn the Skill and Industry of the People of that Country to the Improvement of the Linnen Manufactures, for the Encouragement whercof they promised all Countenance, Favour, and Protection.

IN consequence of these Addresses the Lords Justices of *Ireland*, in their Speech at Opening the Session of Parliament in *September* 1698. “ Re-
 “ commended the Linnen and Hempen Manufacture
 “ as what would contribute much to People the
 “ Country

“ Country, and would be more advantageous to
 “ that Kingdom than the Woollen Manufacture,
 “ which being the settled Staple Trade of *England*,
 “ from whence all Foreign Markets are supply’d,
 “ could never be encourag’d in *Ireland*; whereas the
 “ Linnen and Hempen Manufactures would not only
 “ be encourag’d, as consistent with the Trade of
 “ *England*, but would render the Trade of *Ireland*
 “ both useful and necessary to *England*.

HEREUPON the Commons of *Ireland*, fully inclin’d to satisfy us in that Matter, Resolved to regulate their Woollen Trade, after whatever Manner might be most agreeable to *England*. To this End they had under Consideration Heads of a Bill to limit the Number of Sheep to be kept by any Person in that Country. But that was not what we sought after. It was not our Business to lessen the Quantity of Wool in *Ireland*, but to prevent the Manufacturing of it there, for Foreign Markets. Therefore the Lords Justices and Council, pursuant to Instructions from *England*, fram’d Heads of a Bill, whereby four Shillings on the Value of twenty Shillings of Old Draperies, and two Shillings on the like Value of all New Draperies (except Freezes) was imposed as a new Duty on all those Manufactures of Wool, to be exported between the 25th of *March* 1699. and the 25th of *March* 1702. And although the Manufacturers of *Ireland* petition’d the Parliament against this Bill, yet it was readily pass’d into a Law, so willing were the People of *Ireland* to remove all our Apprehensions of their rivalling us in this our Darling Manufacture.

AND it is certain this Duty (which was calculated to divert the Manufacturers by Degrees, from the Woollen, to the Linnen and Hempen Manufactures) would have effectually prevented the People of *Ireland* from frequenting the Markets we supply’d with
 Woollen

Woollen Manufactures. Or, if on Tryal, it had prov'd insufficient, other Methods might have been pursued to that End. But we did not wait the Success of this Law. Even the Concurrence of the People of *Ireland*, with the Method propos'd on the Part of *England*, seems to have heighten'd our Jealousy, by making us imagine the Manufactures of *Ireland* were arriv'd at a dangerous Pitch of Improvement, since they could be suppos'd capable of bearing such an extravagant Duty as was laid on them by their own Parliament : And therefore an Act was pass'd in *England* in the Year 1699. prohibiting the Exportation of Woollen Manufactures from *Ireland* to any other Place, but the few Wool Ports of *England* and *Wales*. But such Importations being left liable to Duties laid on Cloaths, &c. by Acts antecedent to this I am now speaking of, that Part of the Woollen Trade which our Legislature seem'd willing to allow to the People of *Ireland*, became impracticable.

By this Means, it is true, we subverted the Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland*, but it is apprehended we, at the same Time, rais'd more formidable Enemies to our Trade. For Numbers of Workmen being at once depriv'd of Employment, were drove out of *Ireland* to seek their Bread in other Countries, as the *Flemings* were formerly forced into *England*, and being encourag'd (especially by *France*) to set up their Trades, we were soon deprived of several Markets for our Woollen Goods, to the very great Detriment of the general Commerce of *England*.

It is probable these Mischiefs could not have been brought upon us, had not Means been found to carry great Quantities of Wool from *England* and *Ireland* to the Foreign Factories. But no Prohibition could prevent the Material from following

ing the Manufacturer, when sufficient Profit was allow'd to compensate for the Risk of the Exporter. And it is certain, that though no Part of *Europe* yields such large Quantities of Wool, proper for fine, neat Draperies, as *England* and *Ireland* : Yet *Spain* has finer Wool than ours ; and all Countries afford some Sort of Wool, which, though much coarser, answers the Use of their common People, and when mixed with Wool of these Kingdoms, serves for several Sorts of Manufactures fit for general Use in all Countries. So that we find, by sad Experience, that we acted too precipitately in destroying, instead of regulating the Woollen Trade of *Ireland* ; and perhaps the best Remedy we can apply to the Mischief thereby brought upon ourselves, is to tread back the Steps wherein we have so long wander'd.

I WOULD not have you from hence imagine, that I think it proper to allow the Exportation of Woollen Manufactures from *Ireland*, to any other Parts but *England* ; for that is not my Purpose. On the contrary, the Advantages arising from the Woollen Trade, are what we ought to confine as much as possible to *England*. In order to which it may be worth considering, whether by the Assistance of *Ireland*, we might not recover those Branches of our Trade, out of which the *French* and other Nations have very near beat us, by the Cheapness of their Labour. And if, to effect this, it may appear necessary to shew some Favour to the Poor of *Ireland*, we ought not to grudge it to them.

THAT you may have a more perfect View of the State of this Case, I must entreat you to cast your Eyes on the following Abstracts, taken out of the Custom-house Books of *Ireland*.

NUMBER I.

An Abstract of Woollen Manufactures and Wooll exported from Ireland in the Years, viz.

1683			1684			1685			1686			1687		
Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	Quantit.	Value.	
Drapery { New Pcs. Freezes, Yards Stockings, Pair Yarn, Stones at 18 lb. Wooll at D ^a	5658 $\frac{3}{4}$	l. s. d.	3867 $\frac{1}{4}$	l. s. d.	4937 $\frac{1}{2}$	l. s. d.	8423 $\frac{1}{2}$	l. s. d.	8423 $\frac{1}{2}$	l. s. d.	11360	l. s. d.	11360 00 0	
	74 $\frac{3}{4}$	112 02 6	34	51 00 0	79	118 10 0	29	43 10 0	103	154 10 0	103	154 10 0	154 10 0	
	753189	37654 09 0	562805	28140 05 0	629141	31457 01 0	739178	36958 18 0	1129716	56485 16 0	1129716	56485 16 0	56485 16 0	
	32343	1617 03 0	32691	1634 11 0	24666	1233 06 0	29040	1452 00 0	50418	2520 18 0	50418	2520 18 0	2520 18 0	
	1361	1361 00 0	1264	1264 00 0	725	725 00 0	3227 $\frac{1}{2}$	3227 10 0	3668	3668 00 0	3668	3668 00 0	3668 00 0	
	191832	95916 00 0	170710 $\frac{1}{4}$	85355 12 6	123703	61851 10 0	237859	118929 00 0	256592	128296 00 0	256592	128296 00 0	128296 00 0	
Tot. of the Yea. Val. exported			142319 09 6	120312 13 6		100322 17 0		169034 08 0		202495 04 0		202495 04 0		
Of which the Wooll & Yarn } expor. to Engl. amount to }			97277 00 0	86619 12 6		62576 10 0		122156 10 0		131964 00 0		131964 00 0		
The Value of Manufactures }			45043 09 6	33693 01 0		37746 07 0		46877 18 0		70521 04 0		70521 04 0		
Annually exported - - - }														
Whereof in Freeze & Stockings			29271 12 0	29774 16 0		32690 07 0		38410 18 0		59006 14 0		59006 14 0		
And in New & Old Draperies			5770 17 6	3918 05 0		5056 00 0		8467 00 0		11514 10 0		11514 10 0		

N U M B E R II.

An Abstract of Woollen Manufactures, and Wooll, exported from Ireland in the Years, viz.

1693.			1694.			1695.			1696.			1697.		
Quantit.	Value.		Quantit.	Value.		Quantit.	Value.		Quantit.	Value.		Quantit.	Value.	
Drapery { NewPcs. { Old Pcs. Friezes, Yards Stockings, Pair Yarn, Stones at 18lb. Wool, D ^o	2726 $\frac{3}{4}$	l. s. d.	2912	l. s. d.	2608	l. s. d.	4413	l. s. d.	8847 $\frac{1}{2}$	4413	l. s. d.	8847 $\frac{1}{2}$	l. s. d.	8847 10 0
	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	45 05 0	28 $\frac{1}{2}$	42 15 0	17 $\frac{1}{4}$	25 17 6	34 $\frac{3}{4}$	52 02 6	94 $\frac{1}{4}$	52 02 6	94 $\frac{1}{4}$	141 07 6	141 07 6	141 07 6
	3466 $\frac{1}{2}$	1734 04 0	20839 $\frac{1}{2}$	1041 19 6	41146	2057 06 0	104167 $\frac{1}{4}$	5208 07 0	216936	5208 07 0	216936	108446 16 0	108446 16 0	108446 16 0
	10302	515 01 0	28448 $\frac{1}{2}$	1422 08 0	15012	750 12 0	35032	1751 12 0	75576	1751 12 0	75576	3778 16 0	3778 16 0	3778 16 0
	1897 $\frac{1}{2}$	1897 10 0	1492 $\frac{1}{2}$	1492 10 0	883	883 00 0	7900	7900 00 0	13480	7900 00 0	13480	13480 00 0	13480 00 0	13480 00 0
	36888	1844 00 0	38794	19397 00 0	69751	34875 10 0	89783	44891 10 0	217678	44891 10 0	217678	108839 00 0	108839 00 0	108839 00 0
Tot. of the Yea. Val. exported			26308 12 6	41200 05 6				64216 11 6				145933 09 6	145933 09 6	145933 09 6
Of which the Wooll & Yarn } expor. to Engl. amount to }			20889 10 0	35758 10 0				52791 10 0				122319 00 0	122319 00 0	122319 00 0
The Value of Manufactures } Annually exported - - - }														
Whereof in Frieze & Stockings			5419 02 6	5441 15 6				11425 01 6				23614 09 6	23614 09 6	23614 09 6
And in New & Old Draperies			2464 07 6	2807 18 0				6959 19 0				14625 12 0	14625 12 0	14625 12 0
			2954 15 0	2633 17 6				4465 02 6				8988 17 6	8988 17 6	8988 17 6

THE First is an Abstract of the Woollen Manufactures and Wool exported in five Years immediately before the Revolution; and it appears from thence, that though the People of *Ireland* had made some Progress in the Woollen Manufacture, yet in the Year of their greatest Exports, viz. *Anno* 1687, the Value of all their Manufactures (except Yarn that came to *England*) did not exceed 70,521 *l.* 14 *s.* and of that Sum 56,485 *l.* 16 *s.* was in Freezes, a Manufacture we never trouble our Heads with, and 2,520 *l.* 18. *s.* in coarse *Irish* Stockings, both amounting to 59,006 *l.* 14 *s.*; so that the old and new Draperies, which alone could interfere with our Trade, did not exceed 11,514 *l.* 10 *s.* And it is observable, that more Wool and Yarn was brought into *England* that Year, than in any of the preceding Years; from whence it is evident, that our Manufactures increased, in Proportion as the Trade of *Ireland* prosper'd.

THE next Abstract is of the Exports of Woollen Manufactures and Wool, for five Years after the War in *Ireland*. And by comparing these Abstracts together you will perceive;

First, THAT the People of *Ireland* had not, in the Year 1697. being the Year before we complain'd of their Manufactures, recover'd above one third Part of the Woollen Trade which they had before the War.

Secondly, THAT as before, so after the Revolution, the Manufactures exported from *Ireland*, were mostly Freezes and coarse Stockings, wherein we very little employ ourselves for Foreign Markets.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, THAT in Proportion as the People of *Ireland* improv'd in these Manufactures, so the Quantities of Wool and Yarn exported from thence to *England* increas'd.

AND perhaps you will, from these Observations, conclude, that since we thought proper to grasp at all this Trade, and declare our Jealousy of even our Fellow-Subjects of *Ireland* enjoying such a small Pittance of it, it had been more prudent to have proceeded by Methods proper to turn the Industry of the People of *Ireland*, by Degrees, from the Woollen, to other Manufactures, than to have followed the Course we took with them.

IT is true, that for some few Years after we had destroy'd the Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland*, we seem'd to engross all that Trade ; but this Appearance of Benefit abated, as the Foreign Factories, which were rais'd out of the Ruins of the *Irish*, acquired Strength ; and Means were contriv'd to draw the Material after the Manufacturers. This is but too evidently our Case ; however, to shew you how it stands with Regard to *Ireland*, it may not be improper to give you some Abstracts of the Wool and Yarn exported from thence for *England*, in several Periods of Time.

AND, first, for the four Years after the Destruction of the *Irish* Manufactures, we find Exported, viz.

		Wool, Stones at 18 lb.	Yarn, Stones at 18 lb.	Total Wool and Yarn.
Year ending <i>Christ- mas</i>	1700	336,292	26,617	362,909
	1701	302,812	23,390	326,202
	1702	315,473	43,648	359,121
	1703	360,862	36,873	397,735
Totals for four Years		1,315,439	130,528	1,445,967
Medium for each Year		328,859 $\frac{3}{4}$	32,632	361,491 $\frac{3}{4}$

The next Abstract of the Exports of the Wool and Yarn is for four Years, taken at the Time of the Peace of *Utrecht*, viz. For the Years

		Wool, Stones at 18 lb.	Yarn, Stones at 18 lb.	Total Wool and Yarn.
Ending <i>Lady-Day</i>	1711	310,136	55,273	365,409
	1712	263,946	60,108	324,054
	1713	171,871	68,548	240,419
	1714	147,153	58,147	205,300
Totals for four Years		893,106	242,076	1,135,182
Medium for each Year		223,276 $\frac{1}{2}$	60,519	283,795 $\frac{1}{2}$

AND the following Abstracts is for the Years ending at *Christmas* 1729; viz.

		Wool, Stone at 18 lb.	Yarn, Stones at 18 lb.	Total Wool and Yarn.
Year ending <i>Christmas</i>	1726	51,371	87,261	138,632
	1727	58,182	72,047	130,229
	1728	49,784	80,428	130,212
	1729	38,667	91,854	130,521
Totals for four Years	}	198,004	331,590	529,594
Medium for each Year	}	49,501	82,897 $\frac{1}{2}$	132,398 $\frac{1}{2}$

THUS it appears, that the Imports of Wool from *Ireland* gradually decreas'd from the Year 1703 to this time; and 'tis worth observing, since it seems to point out the Cause of this Decrease, that immediately on the Peace of *Utrecht*, the Exports of Wool from *Ireland* to *England* fell short of what they were during the War: Infomuch, that the Decrease from the Year 1711 to the Year 1714, was 162,983 Stones; which, it is more than probable, found its Way into *France*.

AND from these Abstracts it appears, that the Difference between the Total of Wool and Yarn exported in the Year 1703 and 1729, is 267,214 Stones; so that upon the Whole we may conclude, that as we before observ'd, the Trade of *England* increas'd, and our Imports of Wool from *Ireland* grew

grew greater, in proportion, as the People of *Ireland* improved in their coarse Manufactures: So we have diminish'd in our Imports of Wool from *Ireland*, and, I am afraid, in our Manufactures at Home, and our Foreign Trade also, in a very strong Degree, ever since we destroy'd the Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland*. So true it is, that *England* can never fall into Measures for unreasonably cramping the Industry of the People of *Ireland*, without doing herself the greatest Prejudice.

IT remains now to consider the most proper Method to retrieve our Woollen Manufacture from the Mischiefs brought upon it, by past Mistakes in our Conduct, with respect to *Ireland*: And in order to make the better Judgment of this Matter, it is necessary to lay before you a State of the Hardships laid on the fair Dealer in Wool and Yarn imported from *Ireland*, that you may see the Laws which enforc'd those Difficulties, have thereby given Encouragement to the Clandestine Trader.

	l. s. d.
THE Duty on a Stone of Wool exported from <i>Ireland</i> , was, by an <i>Irish</i> Stat. 14, 15 Car. II. Cap. 9. ————	} 0 01 3

THE Charge of Licence from the Lord Lieutenant of <i>Ireland</i> , with Fees, &c. a- mount to about ————	} 0 00 5
--	----------

BY limiting the Exportation of Wool from <i>Ireland</i> to a few Ports, there is an extraordinary Charge created on each Stone of Wool exported for <i>England</i> , of about—	} 0 00 5
---	----------

AND as the Importation of Wool from <i>Ireland</i> is restrain'd to a few Ports in <i>Eng- land</i> and <i>Wales</i> , this creates an extraordi- nary Expence on each Stone of Wool, equal to about ————	} 0 00 3
--	----------

In all 0 02 4
per

per Stone, which the Clandestine Trader avoids. This may therefore be accounted a Profit he acquir'd by the Law of the Land, to compensate for the Risque he runs. And as the Price of Wool in the Farmers Hands in *Ireland*, by a Medium, from the Year 1703 to 1729, did not exceed 6s. 6d. *per* Stone; this *Premium*, if I may so call it, amounted to above 36 *per Cent*. It must not therefore seem strange, that Men turn'd their Thoughts to contrive Means of reaping this Benefit, especially when they were invited to it, by other Encouragements in the Countries to which they carry'd the Wool.

A DUE Consideration of this Matter prevail'd with his Majesty to pass an Act the last Session of Parliament in *Ireland*, whereby the Duty on Wool exported from that Kingdom to *England*, was taken off. Thus the Clandestine Trader is depriv'd of part of the Advantages he had over the Fair Dealer: And when more Ports are open'd in *Ireland* and *England* for Exporting and Importing Wool, it is evident, the Fair Dealer will be put on a more equal Foot of Trade than formerly, and this will of Course prove a great Obstruction to the Running of Wool from *Ireland*.

THE next Article that requires our Attention, is, the Woollen-Yarn imported from *Ireland*. This Produce of the Labour of the Poor of that Country has always been found useful to us in carrying on of our Manufactures; yet, I know not by what Policy, it has been charg'd with Duties, both on the Exportation from *Ireland*, and Importation to *England*. But the Duty payable in *Ireland* was released by the same Act which took off the Duty of Wool. However, Yarn imported from *Ireland*, is
still

still liable to a Duty here of 9 s. 6 d. per Cent. that is, on each Stone of 18 lb. about ——— 0 01 6

AND it is liable to the Charge of Licence, and the Inconveniency of a few Ports for Exportation and Importation, amounting on each Stone, as by the former Computation on the Wool, to about ——— } 0 01 1

In all 0 02 7
per Stone of 18 lb. Weight. So that each Pack of Yarn weighing 240 lb. is liable to a Charge of 1 l. 15 s. 6 d.

THERE are different Values of *Irish* Yarn, some being finer than others, but all are liable to the same Duty. However, as Woollen Yarn, of which Cloths for general Exportation are made, is usually sold at about 9 l. 10 s. per Pack, it appears, that the aforesaid Charge thereon amounts to about 18 per Cent. and this Charge on the finest Yarn falls but short of 9 per Cent. So that we ought not to hesitate at easing our Trade from this Burthen. Our own Interest calls upon us so to do; and the Policy of *France*, who finding [Now that the Duty on Wool exported from *Ireland* to *England* is taken off] she cannot get raw Wool as formerly, admits the Importation of Yarn, which before she would not receive, makes it absolutely necessary we should give this Ease to the Importation of *Irish* Yarn, in order to prevent our Rivals from reaping the Benefit which is to be made of the Wool and Labour of the Poor of *Ireland*.

BUT it is objected, That as by falling into these Courses, larger Quantities of Wool will be imported from *Ireland* than formerly; so the Price of that Commodity will be thereby lowered amongst us, and consequently the Value of our Land abated. And that

that by admitting *Irish* Yarn Duty-free, we shall deprive our Poor of a great Means of their Subsistence. These, it must be confess'd, are popular Objections, and apt to take with Men who consider this Matter superficially ; but when they are duly weigh'd, they will be found altogether groundless. Nay, it will appear, that encouraging of our Manufactures in these Particulars, must, on the contrary, raise the Price of our Wool, and give fuller Employment to our Poor.

To make this appear, it is necessary to observe, that every Stone of Wool clandestinely exported from *Ireland*, enables our Rivals in the Woollen Trade, to work up two Stones more of their coarse hairy Wool, into a Manufacture which supplants us in Foreign Markets. Consequently, if there are 200,000 Stones of Wool clandestinely exported from *Ireland* ; then it follows, that we lose by that pernicious Trade, not only the Benefit of manufacturing those 200,000 Stones of *Irish* Wool, and the consequential Profits thereon, but our Farmers lose a Demand for 400,000 Stones more, and our Manufacturers are depriv'd of Employment in working up this Quantity of Wool also. And thus it is, that the Clandestine Exportation of Wool has always lower'd the Value of *English* Wool, by destroying our Trade, robbing our Poor of Employment, and depriving our Farmers of a Demand for double the Quantity of Wool run, and transferring all these Benefits to other Countries.

If therefore we can prevent this destructive Trade, and thereby bring the Wool of *Ireland*, suppose 200,000 Stones more than formerly, into *England* ; it is evident, that tho' this increases the Quantity of Wool in *England*, yet as it restores to us a more extended Trade, and a Demand for Manufactures to be made, not only by these 200,000 Stones of Wool,

D

but

but also by 400,000 Stones more of our Wool, it must raise, instead of lowering the Price of the Wool of *England*.

As to the Objection, that the admitting of *Irish* Yarn Duty-free will deprive our Poor of Employment, the contrary will appear on a full Examination of this Question. It may, indeed be allow'd, that if we could engross all this Trade, and were free from the Danger of being supplanted therein by other Nations, we might grasp at every the minutest Part of the Woollen Manufacture, and be regardless at what dear Rates we make them up: But Experience hath taught us other Things, and we ought to be fully convinc'd, that our Neighbours daily encroach on this Branch of our Trade. But if we prevent their getting the Wool or Yarn of *Ireland*, we shall soon recover our Commerce, to the general Advantage of *England*. And as thereby we shall have Occasion for many more Hands in every Branch of this Manufacture; so it is necessary we should employ the Poor of *Ireland* in spinning their Wool, which was formerly carry'd out of that Kingdom into other Countries. And as the Article of Spinning is an inconsiderable Part of the Woollen Manufacture, when compar'd with the other valuable Trades it employs, we ought, in Prudence, to discharge the Duties which were formerly laid on the Importation of Yarn from *Ireland*, that thereby we may not only make it their Interest to prevent the clandestine Exportation of Wool, but also gain several Employments for our People which must of course be transferr'd to other Nations, if they can draw over to them the Yarn of *Ireland*.

Thus then it appears, that the Importation of large Quantities of Wool and Yarn from *Ireland*, instead of lowering the Price of Wool, and depriving our Poor of Employment, will have contrary Effects.

It remains therefore to consider what further Means can be apply'd to prevent the clandestine Exportation of Wool from *Ireland* ; and for my part, I cannot conceive there is any Necessity for more penal Laws to this End. Those already enacted, are as rigorous as can be well invented, but they have not hitherto had the desir'd Effect, because the Advantages which the Clandestine Trader had over the Fair Dealer, were sufficient to tempt him to pursue his pernicious Traffick. If therefore these Advantages, which amounted to 35 *per Cent.* are totally taken away, this will prove a more effectual Check to the mischievous Practice of Running Wool, than any further compulsory Laws, which the more penal they are, the less effectual they generally prove.

BUT if any new Law is thought necessary, it ought to be free from Expences, Inconveniencies, or Hardships on the Clothier, or the Grower of Wool ; for that you will readily perceive it is our Interest to ease our Woollen Manufactures from Burthens, and unnecessary Restrictions, and not to subject them to more Inconveniencies, especially such as will either discourage the Importation of the Material, or obstruct the producing thereof among us.

THESE are some of the Thoughts which at this time have occur'd to me on the present Condition of our Woollen Manufactures with respect to *Ireland* ; and if what I have said on this Subject contributes any way to cure the Evil with which our general Commerce is infected, I shall think the Pains I have taken on this Occasion very well bestow'd.

I am, &c.



University of Toronto
Library

DO NOT
REMOVE
THE
CARD
FROM
THIS
POCKET



